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THE MOVEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION.

It is now six months since the first steps were taken in the present movement to promote religious and moral education by means of a new organization to survey the whole field and to assist all existing agencies in the larger and better performance of their work. The response to the Call of the Council of Seventy has been remarkable. Many of the ablest pastors and Sunday-school workers in all denominations have pronounced the movement timely, wise, and necessary, and have allied themselves with it. Leading educators in the best institutions of learning, and in the public-school systems of the United States, have heartily indorsed the undertaking and have promised their co-operation. Some twenty-five of the leading religious papers of all denominations have given full announcement of the movement, and have cordially commended it to their readers. All the scholarly and progressive workers in the field of religion and morality are uniting to make this new organization an educating, uplifting force in the twentieth century. A full measure of success is guaranteed to the movement by the support which it already possesses. It would be a revelation to the public at large if the earnest letters which the Council has received by hundreds from prominent men and women engaged in religious and moral instruction could be published for their reading. We regret our inability at this time to publish these clear descriptions of the defects and shortcomings of our present training of the young. They leave no doubt that the demand is imperative for such an organization as is projected.

*RESPONSE TO
THE CALL*

Obviously the work is one which will need to be carried on with great wisdom, and the direction which the new organization will take should be determined by the organization itself after it has been created. The right men must be selected to occupy its official positions—large-minded, wise, able, and representative men, who can combine educational principles and modern knowledge with the wisdom and experience of practical work, and who can appreciate the true place of all existing agencies in the furnishing of a true religious and moral education. There is every reason to believe that the convention will perform its work with clear understanding, united purpose, and high wisdom.

In order that the ideas and wishes of as many persons as possible might be united in the undertaking, and that the largest wisdom might prevail in the arrangements for the *PRIVATE CONFERENCES OF SUPPORTERS* Convention, private conferences have been held with the supporters of the movement in the following cities: New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Hartford, New Haven, Springfield, Providence, Buffalo, Cleveland, Oberlin, and Detroit. Representatives of the Council have met in this way about three hundred of the leading men connected with this movement in the larger cities of the East and middle West; and these conferences have had a determining influence in directing the preparations for the Convention. The ideas and the plans of the movement were fully presented and freely discussed in these conferences, and it may be fairly said that the movement, as it now stands before the public, is such as these several hundred men by united thought have worked out. The danger that the movement should be merely the embodiment of the ideas of a few men has by this means been obviated, and the movement stands forth as a representative one. It is the sincere wish of the Council of Seventy that this fact may be fully appreciated, and that all men who are earnest in the promotion of religious and moral education should co-operate with the several hundred who are inaugurating the movement.

The organization which it is anticipated will be created by the Convention, in accordance with the Call of the Council of Seventy,

should aim to survey the whole field of religious and moral education, to ascertain what is being accomplished in all portions of the field, by all agencies, and to assist all organizations, institutions, and individuals who are now engaged in this great work. The new organization should not be simply a new agency on the same plane with others, but an organization which can stand above all existing agencies and institutions to scan the whole field, to perfect and to spread an ideal, to advise as to principles and as to ways and means for better work, to guide all existing agencies and all individuals toward a unified and a common conception of their task, and to inspire a supreme, combined effort toward the higher religious and moral education. The movement therefore seeks to avoid the narrowness which would result were its ideas and plans those alone of one group of men, or of one group of agencies or institutions. The new organization should not allow itself to be identified with any one denomination, or with any one school of biblical criticism, or with any one of the many agencies in the large field, to the exclusion of the others. The organization would fail of its opportunity and its mission if it aimed to be nothing more than a new Sunday-school association, or an instrument for the spread of unproved hypotheses in biblical interpretation, or if it only embodied the ideas of a group of extremists in religious education.

The scope of the movement should certainly be no narrower than that set forth in the first official statement, namely: (1) the Sunday Schools, (2) the Home, (3) the Theological Seminaries and Colleges, (4) The Academies and Private Schools, (5) the Public Schools, (6) Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, (7) Young People's Societies, (8) Mothers' Clubs, (9) City and Village Libraries, (10) Church and Sunday-School Libraries, (11) the Religious Press, (12) the Daily Press. It is, of course, a somewhat recent venture to build up among Protestants an organization which can combine men who think differently about many matters of religious belief, biblical interpretation, and Christian activity. Nevertheless, the movements which have had the greatest success in the

present generation are those movements in which many workers of many minds, but *of one purpose*, have joined hands to promote a common cause by united action. Instances of such co-operation are the Young Men's Christian Association, the Christian Endeavor Society, the International Sunday School Association, and the non-denominational religious press. Such a fusion of interests and activities is believed to be now practicable for this work of religious and moral education, and the welcome and support which this new movement has found is proof conclusive that it is the right thing at the right time.

Co-OPERATION WITH EXISTING AGENCIES An organization which attempts to unify, advise, and promote all organizations working in the same field and at the same great task is not one that should wish to supersede any of the existing agencies which it seeks to assist. The opinion which has occasionally been advanced concerning this movement that it sought to supersede the International Sunday School Association is an utter misconception. The new organization should no more supersede the International Association than it should supersede the Young Men's Christian Association, or the home training of children, or the religious press. The situation, as it at present exists in this country, may be compared with that of an army made up of single regiments with their various officers, but without any general staff of officers unifying the whole mass. What is sought is an organization which can accomplish for the single organizations and individuals engaged in this work the same service that in military affairs is rendered by the general staff. Not, of course, that the military method is to be introduced, but that there may be a unifying of agencies and individuals for the better accomplishment of the work which all are seeking to do. The function of such an organization would be to advise and to inspire all agencies, and to perform such general service as would promote the efficiency of all. The effect of the new organization upon the Sunday school should be to enlighten and arouse pastors to their duty regarding the Sunday school, to make its crucial importance for religious and moral education more clearly and widely recognized, to improve its religious and

moral instruction by the setting forth of a higher ideal both in substance and in method, to increase the knowledge and ability of the teachers, to enlist the co-operation of many able people who are out of sympathy with the present Sunday-school instruction, and thereby increase the attendance and efficiency of the Sunday school because it will be seen to be performing its mission in a better way. A great body of progressive workers in the Sunday-school field, including some of the leading general officers of the International Association, already see clearly the aim and direction of the undertaking, and have expressed themselves as approving the plans which have been proposed for the new organization.

One of the gratifying results of the present movement is the cordial response which has come from the Young Men's Christian Associations throughout the country. Many of the state secretaries and international officers of the Young Men's Christian Association have indorsed the movement most heartily, and have assured us that the Association would welcome and make use of the recommendations for better religious and moral instruction which can be worked out and offered. There has been no dissenting voice from this great and growing agency. When one considers the enormous number of young men who are connected with the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States, and the vast influence of the Associations upon their religious and moral life, it will be seen how much can be accomplished by a higher ideal and a better substance and method of instruction in this department of the field.

The indorsement and co-operation of the religious press also, which has been indicated above, is a significant fact of the progress of the movement. One does well to consider what twenty-five leading religious papers of the country can accomplish when they undertake to spread the ideal and the recommendations of the proposed new organization. Indeed, the possibilities of the situation are almost beyond one's power to conceive, they are so wide-reaching, and so fundamental. The opportunity is a rare one in the history of religious progress. It is hoped that the new organization will be made up of such men as shall be able to see

the vast significance of the movement, and shall be able to direct the organization to the fullest accomplishment of its work.

It has been asked what the new organization will desire of the International Sunday School Association. In reply it may *ATTITUDE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION* be said the new organization will probably desire that the Association assume a receptive attitude toward the activities and recommendations of the new organization. The Sunday-school situation is at present this: The mass of the schools are moving along on the lines which the International Association has developed, and are not ready to conform themselves at once to a higher ideal of substance and method in religious and moral instruction ; while on the other hand, about 25 per cent. of the Sunday schools of the country are seeking to adjust their work to this higher ideal by securing a better substance of instruction in accord with modern knowledge, and by using lessons constructed on modern educational principles. It has been the policy of the International Association to allow this minority of schools to make such advance in these lines as they might think best to make, counting that loyalty to the Sunday School Association consisted, not in the use of the uniform lessons, but in the maintenance of their relations with other Sunday schools in the various conventions which are arranged by the International body. This has been a wise policy on the part of the International Association, and no other policy can possibly be for its future good. It was because the action at Denver seemed to many to condemn the liberty which the schools had been exercising that dissatisfaction was felt concerning it. Those members of the Association who stoutly believe and insist that the uniform lessons as now arranged are the ideal thing for all Sunday schools and should be used by all, who think and urge that a departure from the present uniform lesson system would destroy the Association, claimed that the Denver action was a confirmation of their position and a vindication of their policy. Assurances have been given by several officers of the International Association, and others, that the action at Denver did not represent the real sentiment of the convention, and that the action will be

reversed in Toronto in 1905. We hope that this may be accomplished. A restriction of the liberties of the Sunday schools by an official insistence upon their use of the uniform lessons, against their own best judgment in the matter of ideals and methods of instruction, would result in the forced withdrawal of a large proportion of the best schools from their present relations to the Association. That would, indeed, create a division in the Sunday-school ranks, and division is to be avoided if possible. The proposed organization should certainly use its influence against any separation of the Sunday-school forces in order that the better schools may by constant contact with the poorer schools act as a leaven to raise the mass of schools to a higher plane. It is believed that the union of the Sunday schools of the country in a common body to work out together their great contribution to religious and moral education is the thing to be sought, and that the new organization will directly and effectively assist to accomplish this.

The attitude which the Sunday School Association might therefore well adopt toward the new organization would be that of sympathy and good-will, such as would make it practicable for any of its officers and its workers, who so desire, to co-operate with the movement. Also, it should welcome and make use of the ideals and recommendations which may be put forth by this great advisory body; it should recognize that the upper 25 per cent. of the Sunday schools is entitled to a specific assistance which the Association has not undertaken to render; and that the remaining 75 per cent. of the Sunday schools should be helped forward as wisely and as rapidly as possible.

The practical religious and moral value of the Bible is that which has given it its pre-eminence during all the centuries. The historical study of the Bible is not an end in itself, but a means of understanding the Bible. It is an effort to get at the facts of the history involved, and the origin and development of the ideas contained in the biblical books, in order that we may know more truly what the Bible teaches concerning religion and morality. The purpose of such study is to enable us to use the Bible more wisely and

*CONSTRUCTIVE
TEACHING OF
THE BIBLE*

more effectively for the winning of all to the Christian life, for the upbuilding of Christian character, and for the promotion of Christian service. The new organization should stand for the historical study of the Bible as a necessary means of understanding the Bible in its relation to practical Christian belief and activity. But it should be possible for those who hold different theories of the events of biblical history, of the dates and authorship of biblical books, and of the origin and development of the biblical ideas, to unite upon a constructive teaching of the Bible from a practical religious and moral point of view which shall secure for the Bible its proper position and influence in present-day religious and moral instruction. It is sometimes assumed that matters of biblical criticism are of supreme practical significance; but this is a perversion of the right attitude toward the Bible. It is shown not to be true by the fact that men of differing historical views draw from the Bible the same practical standard of Christian life. We cannot place the Bible out of use while a unanimity of opinion among biblical scholars on all historical matters is being reached. Consequently we should be able to unite upon a constructive teaching of the Bible which will leave in solution those historical problems that are now under investigation, while it will put to their legitimate use the vital and clear practical teachings of the Bible in matters of everyday religion and morality.

In the discussion of this movement there has seemed to be at times a confusion as to the relation of substance and method

<i>SUBSTANCE</i>	in religious and moral education. There can be no
<i>AND METHOD</i>	question that a graded system of instruction is as
<i>IN TEACHING</i>	much required for religious and moral instruction

as for so-called secular instruction. But it is also true of both kinds of instruction that in the past remarkably good results have been reached where very superficial and imperfect methods were used. It is a matter of common observation that many of the most efficient teachers, whether in Sunday schools, Young Men's Christian Associations, colleges, or theological seminaries, are persons who have no training in psychology or pedagogy, and who employ no recognizable system in their instruction, but

are able to communicate the right facts and ideas, and to inspire right thought and conduct, to the making of noble men and women. The primary need is, that the schools shall get that higher ideal of religious and moral education which has been worked out, and shall embody in their instruction that better knowledge which is ready for them, coming from the fields of modern biblical, theological, ethical, philosophical, and scientific knowledge.

But this higher kind and content of religious and moral instruction should be given in the best and most effective way, in order that such instruction may accomplish most fully its purpose. Method therefore is of great importance. The uniform lessons now in use in the large majority of Sunday schools are pedagogically imperfect, and in the judgment of many are a hindrance to better work. For this reason the new organization should recommend the introduction of properly graded instruction into all schools as rapidly as they can be prepared to use this better method of instruction; it should set forth the ideal and principles of such instruction; it should advise as to the best available lesson-helps of this kind; and without attempting to create a new uniform system of graded instruction, or becoming itself the author and publisher of an exclusive official system of lesson-helps, it should stimulate and guide the forward movement in this direction by its wisdom and commanding influence. The training of teachers—whether in colleges, Christian associations, young people's societies, or day schools—to understand and to use right methods of instruction will be an important branch of the new organization's work.

One of the problems with which the new organization may grapple is the proper function of the day schools (whether public
INSTRUCTION or private) in the matter of religious and moral
IN THE instruction. This problem has been constantly in
DAY SCHOOLS the minds of those who have conferred together concerning the new organization. The opinion has been earnestly expressed by many of the most eminent and representative of day-school workers that the day schools of the

country are not performing their full mission in the matter of the moral instruction of the children who pass through them. Within the past few months it has been publicly urged in a most definite and earnest way, by eminent leaders in school affairs, that the increase and improvement of the moral instruction of the young in the day schools is an insistent necessity. There is likely to be a unanimity of opinion upon this point, and a consequent rapid advance along this line will probably be made by the officials of public and private schools in the next decade. The new organization could perform a most important service by voicing the opinion of all Christian people as to the inadequacy of the moral instruction at the present time given in these schools. And it might be largely instrumental in directing the specific preparations which are to be made for such improvement.

On the other hand, it is a most delicate question whether specific religious instruction of any kind can be given in the public schools, since these schools are supported by public taxation, and should not be used for the inculcation of sectarian ideas. Let it be emphatically said that the sectarian teaching of the Bible which has sometimes existed in the public schools should never be re-established. It would seem clear that nothing should be attempted in the way of religious instruction in the public schools unless it is such fundamental religious instruction as is believed and taught by all genuinely religious people. The United States in their constitution, and in their history, have never been an atheistic nation. The words which appear upon the coins of the United States, "In God we trust," indicate that our forefathers understood that this government was founded upon a fundamental religious belief, and for the purpose of working out a fundamentally religious mission. Therefore it would not seem impossible that some fundamental religious instruction could be introduced into the training which the states provide for their citizens. The opposition to any kind of religious instruction in the public schools would come perhaps from two directions: first, from those who maintain that religion is wholly a voluntary matter, and that no religious instruction of any kind should be

compulsory; second, from those who maintain a purely secular attitude toward life and regard religion as an antiquated superstition. It is not desired here to discuss this problem, nor to forecast the thought or policy of the new organization on the subject; but simply to state the substance of what has already been said concerning it among the supporters of the movement, and to bring the matter to the attention of those interested, in order that careful thought may be given to it.

The several committees which were constituted by the Council of Seventy for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements for the holding of the Convention in accordance with the Call have been busy with their several duties, and have nearly completed the specific arrangements for the great meeting. The place of the Convention, as has already been announced, is to be Chicago. The date for the Convention is set for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, February 10, 11, and 12, 1903. There will be six sessions, beginning on Tuesday evening, and closing Thursday afternoon. The Tuesday evening meeting will be held in the Auditorium, one of the largest audience rooms in the United States, seating more than four thousand people. This session will be particularly arranged for the public; there will be several speakers of national renown, and a large chorus from the choirs of the city will furnish the music. The three sessions on Wednesday morning, afternoon, and evening will be held in the Second Presbyterian Church; and the two sessions on Thursday morning and afternoon will be held at the University Congregational Church. Between the sessions on Thursday there will be a reception and a luncheon for the members of the Convention.

The entertainment committee is securing private entertainment for as many persons as possible, in order that all members of the Convention who so desire may be provided for. Special rates also will be arranged at good hotels for those who prefer such accommodation. The transportation committee announces a special convention rate of a fare and one-third for the round trip upon the railroads of the Central and Western Passenger Associations to those who attend the Convention.

Suggestions have been sought by the invitation committee from as many of the supporters of the movement as possible, to aid them in arriving at the best method of inviting members to seats in the Convention. The various questions involved have received careful consideration, and the method adopted by the committee is in general as follows: (1) all signers of the Call, as printed in Official Document No. 1, will receive invitations to membership in the Convention; (2) all other suitable persons who indorse the Call under which the Convention meets, and who desire to sit in the Convention, will be invited to membership until a limit of size for the Convention (perhaps five or six hundred) is reached. Letters have been received from several hundred persons expressing their sympathy with the movement, and desiring to attend the Convention. The invitation committee welcomes such letters, as it initiates communication with those persons who are interested in and desirous of promoting the movement.

For various reasons the committee has considered it undesirable to attempt to secure for the Convention a body of formal official delegates from institutions and agencies in the field of religious and moral education. No attempt, therefore, has been made to secure such formal representation. Some institutions and associations have appointed delegates to be present, and the invitation committee have regarded it as their duty and privilege to invite such persons individually. But the Convention will not be a Convention of formal delegates. Rather it will be made up of individuals, gathering as individuals to work out the problems which lie before them. It is impossible at this time to say how many members will be present at the Convention. A safe minimum estimate would be three hundred, while the number is likely to be much larger.

The program of the Convention, as worked out by the program committee, is printed below. The interest which has been taken in the matter, not only by the program committee, but by a large number of other supporters of the movement, has been very great. The possibilities of such a program have been clearly seen, and no

**PLAN OF
MEMBERSHIP**

**PROGRAM OF THE
CONVENTION**

thought or labor has been spared to make the program the best possible for the occasion. The committee was entirely of the opinion that the purpose of the deliberations of the Convention was not to formulate at once specific recommendations to meet all of the problems of religious and moral education, but to view the field and the opportunity of the organization in its complete aspect, and to create the organization itself which might go forward to solve with wisdom and deliberation these great problems. With this idea the present program has been prepared, and it is believed that it will commend itself to the supporters of the movement as the right method of approach and preparation for the new organization. The speakers of the Convention, as may be seen in the program, are men of eminent ability and experience in the field of religious education, and in active Christian service of all kinds; the presence and participation of these men in the Convention will surely mark the meeting as one of the most important religious gatherings of recent years.

The mode of organization to be adopted in creating this new national association is another matter which has engaged the attention of many of those most interested in the movement. The Convention itself will presumably provide a committee which will undertake to prepare and to recommend to the Convention a mode for its organization. It has been frequently proposed that the new organization should be constituted somewhat on the model of the National Educational Association. It will be known to most persons that this eminent organization has developed its constitution by an experience of thirty years, and is now one of the best-organized and most influential educational bodies in the country. It is not unlikely that this new organization for religious and moral education will appeal to thousands of people who will desire to be directly connected with it. If so, provision should be made in the constitution for the admission to membership in some way of all suitable persons who desire such membership; and the official positions should be such that all parts of the country, and all agencies and institutions interested, can be adequately and proportionately represented.

The constitution of the new organization, if patterned after that of the National Educational Association, would provide for an unlimited active membership, open to all persons engaged in the work of religious and moral education on the payment of a small annual fee. These would be divided into several departments, according to the nature of their work, for example: (1) Universities and Colleges, (2) Theological Seminaries, (3) Secondary Public Schools, (4) Elementary Public Schools, (5) Private Schools, (6) Teacher Training, (7) Churches and Pastors, (8) Sunday Schools, (9) Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, (10) Young People's Societies, (11) the Home, (12) Libraries, (13) the Press, (14) Art and Music. There would be an associate membership for supporters of the organization who are not actively engaged in religious and moral instruction. The officers of the organization would be a President, Vice Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a large and representative Board of Directors, a Board of Trustees, and an Executive Committee. Also, after the manner of the Council of the National Educational Association, an elective Council of perhaps fifty to one hundred persons might be formed within the new organization, not to determine officially the ideas or acts of the organization, but to consider the great problems of religious and moral education and to make recommendations thereon to the larger body. It is not to be assumed that this kind of an organization will be created by the Convention; the main features of the National Educational Association's constitution are indicated here simply for general information, and for stimulation of thought regarding the new one to be established.

The outlook for the Convention is most satisfactory. The assurances which have been received of the actual attendance of hundreds of the most effective workers in all departments of the field of religious and moral education guarantee that the Convention in numbers and in personnel will be a gratifying success. The hearty response which has come from many national leaders in reli-

gion and morality shows that there is a clear vision of the opportunity on the part of those who can do the most for the movement, and evinces their determination to put their wisdom and strength at its service. It is, of course, to be recognized that numbers are not the first consideration; numbers have not, indeed, been sought by the invitation committee. Rather the desire has been that those persons who can do most for the cause should be present, and that in addition all suitable persons who desire to attend the Convention should be provided with seats.

To the many who wish to participate in the Convention, but whose circumstances will not permit their attendance, it can be promised that a full report of the proceedings will be published as early as possible; and that the daily press and the religious press will contain some account of what is said and done. Great things are expected of the Convention, both in its deliberations and in its action; and we may look forward with confidence to the realization of our best hopes.